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ישראל רשות העתיקות

Jaffa Audio Tours

5

The Colony, Boulevard and Station Route



התחנה

פ' י

יפו העתיקה
החברה לTERMOM

יְפּוֹ הַעֲתִיק
הַמָּרוּבָה לְפָנֶיךָ

המישלמה המוסמך לסתור יפו
الملمة المسماة لفتح يافا

הזרמת החירותים לפיתוח יפו

ميناء يافا
נמל יפו
Jaffa Port



Jaffa Audio Tours -

The Colony, Boulevard and Station Route

The Story of the American-German Colony,
Jerusalem Boulevard and the Train Station



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Operating the audio tour is very easy. All you have to do is:

- look at the map
- reach the selected site – and activate the audio system when you get there.
- Every point on the route is a stop marked on the map. You can do the tour according to the suggested sequence, or choose to focus on a few selected sites and customize the tour to your own pace and schedule.

You can listen to the tour with any device that plays MP3 files, using personal headphones or portable speakers connected to the player, enabling a group of people to listen together.

Please note: a single tone: * - indicates a pause in the track. After hearing the tone, we suggest that you press the Pause button and wait for further instructions.

A double tone: ** - indicates the end of the track. After hearing it, you should stop the player and reactivate it at the tour's next stop.

You can start the tour at any stop of your choice. When you reach the selected site, activate the player on the proper track. We suggest you refer to the map.



Stop No. 1

The Corner of Eilat Street and Auerbach Street

Hello and welcome, as you enter one of the most fascinating and intriguing neighborhoods in Jaffa's history. Starting in the second half of the 19th century, God-fearing colonists and Christian missionaries with the best of intentions lived and worked in the small area before you. The occupants of these homes came from distant lands, such as Russia and England, Ethiopia and Poland, Germany and the United States. Together they created and shaped the unique fabric of the neighborhood we're now about to visit.

Bustling Eilat Street, which we're now standing on, was called Nablus Road in the 19th century, and served as the main thoroughfare that connected Jaffa to cities in the northern part of the country.

Before continuing our story, please make note of the four-story building located on the corner of Eilat Street and Auerbach Street. During the British Mandate period, it served as the headquarters of the infamous British secret police – called the Criminal Investigation Department – or in short, CID. People considered insurgents by the British were detained, investigated and tortured here – Arabs and Jews alike. If you're quiet, maybe you'll be able to hear their cries...

In the period following World War II, the building was targeted by the Etzel and Lehi underground movements and was attacked on numerous occasions using firearms and explosive devices.

And now, try and disregard the appearance of the modern street, with its asphalt, cars and buses. Remove all of them, and draw a picture in your mind of a narrow dirt road, with citrus groves on both sides and camels roaming freely about. You're invited to enter Auerbach Street via that road, and begin walking up the small hill towards the American Colony of 1866.

Stop next to 4 Auerbach Street and listen to the next explanation.



Stop No. 2

The Norton Residence 4 Auerbach Street

The wooden house we're standing next to was built in 1866 by an American family named Norton, originally from Maine in the United States. The family's name was carved on some of the wooden panels uncovered during the building's preservation. The members of the Norton family – Captain Ackley Norton, his wife, and their five daughters – were part of a large group of 157 Protestant Americans who belonged to a Christian sect called Messiah's Church, and they had come to the Holy Land to establish an agricultural colony. The group was headed by a preacher named George Adams, who believed that settling the Holy Land would prepare the ground for the return of the Jews from the Diaspora and hasten the redemption and Christ's Second Coming.

The American colonists arrived in Jaffa on September 22, 1866, aboard a ship called the Nellie Chapin that was laden with a multitude of goods. The members of the group had brought with them from the United States all the equipment and furnishings needed to help them get settled in their new country. They even brought their wooden prefabricated houses, which had been dismantled in Maine and were ready for reassembly.

The beginning was not easy. Various bureaucratic obstacles delayed the purchase of the land and the establishment of their homes in the new colony, and for several months the colonists had to live in tents on Jaffa's shore. They were not used to the climate and had never been exposed to the different diseases that prevailed here, and many fell ill. Nine of them, mostly children, even died during the first weeks after their arrival.

Despite the harsh conditions and the illnesses, the group managed to found the colony at the end of 1866. The land was purchased legally and about ten homes were built as planned along

the neighborhood's two streets, currently called Auerbach Street and Beer-Hofmann Street.

The Norton residence we're standing next to was one of those first wooden houses – having been dismantled in the United States and reassembled here. It was a two-story house with a basement, and at a later stage a balcony was added that still encompasses the building. The building was in a state of neglect for many years and even faced demolition until it was renovated in 1990. Due to its meticulous restoration, it won the President of Israel's Preservation Award in 1991. The well-known restaurant "Keren" – run by the chef Haim Cohen – was situated in the building for several years. According to current plans, it will become part of an upscale residential housing project.

Continue walking up the street, stop at No. 6 and listen to the next explanation.

**



Stop No. 3

The Jerusalem Hotel

6 Auerbach Street

The splendid stone house in front of us was built in 1867 by the Drisko brothers, who belonged to the group of American colonists who had settled in Jaffa. It was the only house in the American Colony built out of stone, as opposed to the other homes that were made of wood. It was supposed to be a deluxe guest house named the Grand Hotel. Because the construction works lasted longer than planned, the brothers didn't manage to open the hotel in time for the Easter tourist season. The delay turned out to be devastating: the Drisko brothers lost all their money, had to sell the hotel to a missionary by the name of Metzler, and left the country.

And who was Metzler? To answer that question, we actually need to become acquainted with two people who had a great impact on the colony's fate.

One of them was the German-born Christian missionary named Peter Martin Metzler, who arrived in Jaffa in 1858. He ran a pilgrim mission and bought some of the American Colony's land in order to expand the mission's activities – a plan that ultimately was not carried out.

The person who changed Metzler's plans was a Russian aristocrat by the name of Plato von Ustinov, who had come to Jaffa in 1862 seeking a cure after falling off his galloping horse. He stayed in Metzler's home and the two became close friends. At the beginning of 1869, their friendship led Ustinov to invite Metzler to come to Russia and help him manage his estate there – an invitation which Metzler decided to accept.

As a result of that decision, Metzler began looking for a buyer for the American Colony homes which he had purchased a year earlier.

At the time, there were a few hundred German colonists in Haifa who belonged to a Christian sect which in German was called "Tempelgesellschaft" – meaning The Temple Association – or in short, the Templers. Members of that association had settled in the Holy Land and were looking for a place to establish an agricultural colony.



The Templers' story dates back to the second half of the 19th century in southern Germany. A new Christian religious group that emerged there sought to instill in its followers principles and values of sincere faith in God, love of fellow man, and modesty.

The group's leaders also preached about the obligation to go to God's land – the Holy Land – where they would establish agricultural communities and serve as an example to the local residents by leading a simple and hard-working life.

Some of the Templers who were in Haifa at the time accepted Metzler's offer. They bought the houses in the American Colony from him, moved to Jaffa, and took up residence in what now became the German Colony.

The building we're standing next to was purchased in 1870 by Ernst Hardegg, whose father was the leader of the Templers in Haifa. Hardegg renovated it, made some additions, and opened a new hotel called the Jerusalem Hotel. It was one of the best and most luxurious hotels in the city of Jaffa. It had 24 rooms, all of which were named after figures in the Bible. The upper section of the building's façade was designed to resemble a city wall, and a celebratory passage taken from the Book of Isaiah – "and you shall call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise" – was inscribed above the elegant doorway.

Charles Warren, a British army officer who stayed at the Jerusalem Hotel soon after it opened, wrote about it in his memoirs:

"We reached the German Colony which had replaced that of the Americans. The hotel is a large building managed by Hardegg. The Templers seem to be a highly decent, hard-working and simple community. I didn't hear much about their religious faith, but if their acts derive from their religion, then I can recommend it wholeheartedly. The colony is very competent to settle the Holy Land. Its members forgo their personal interests in favor of those of the community, and because there are no lazy or idle people among them, they will no doubt achieve great success."

The former Jerusalem Hotel is currently designated to be part of an upscale residential project, and the plan is to open some sections of it to the public.

Let's proceed now up the street to No. 10, where we'll listen to the next explanation.

**

Stop No. 4

The Wentworth Residence

The Corner of 10 Auerbach Street and Beer-Hofmann Street

We're standing next to one of the houses built in 1866, which was part of the American Colony and belonged to the Wentworth family: the father, Mark Wentworth, his wife, and their four small children. The original house included only the right wing of the current structure – the part made of wood.

The Drisko brothers, whom we met at our previous stop, weren't the only ones in the American Colony who left Jaffa and whose homes were taken over by members of the Templer Association.

The American colonists were unfamiliar with the climate and terrain in the Holy Land. They clung to the work methods they had brought with them from the United States, and their efforts to work the land failed. In the summer of 1867, they came to the realization that the meager yield of their crops would be insufficient to live on and they faced a hopeless situation. Their money had run out, and their leader George Adams, forgive me for saying so, turned out to be a chronic alcoholic and was unable to manage the colony. So the colonists began to look for ways to return to their homeland.

Much to their fortune, a group of wealthy American tourists had just arrived in Jaffa, who were in the midst of a pleasure excursion in the Orient. When they heard the colonists' sad story, Moses Beach, one of the tourists, donated a large sum of money to pay for their passage back to Maine. Another member of the same group was a young journalist by the name of Mark Twain. In his entertaining book "Innocents Abroad," Twain described the adventures of this rich group of tourists. He also wrote about the fate of the American Colony, calling it a "complete fiasco."



On October 1, 1867, most of the American colonists left Jaffa aboard the tourist ship and began their sad journey home to the United States.

The Wentworth family, who lived in this house, were among those who left Jaffa. The house was bought by a Templer family – the Franks, who added its left wing built out of stone. At a certain stage, the building served as a guesthouse called the Frank Hotel.

After being in a state of neglect for many years and facing imminent demolition, the house was purchased by Jean and Reed Holmes, who were descendants of the original American colonists. They restored the house and opened a museum on the first floor as well as a heritage center, called the Maine Friendship House.

If you schedule a visit in advance, you'll be able to see photographs and artifacts from the period that depict the history of the American Colony, which later became the German Colony.

Now turn west and enter Beer-Hofmann Street. The building on your right is the Immanuel Hostel. After obtaining permission, go inside and continue walking until you reach the inner yard. Stop next to the Bengali ficus tree whose roots are suspended in the air and listen to the next explanation.

**

Stop No. 5

The Park Hotel Garden (Immanuel Hostel) 14 Beer-Hofmann Street

Remember the Russian aristocrat, Plato von Ustinov? The guy who invited the missionary Metzler to his estate in Russia?

Well, he's back!

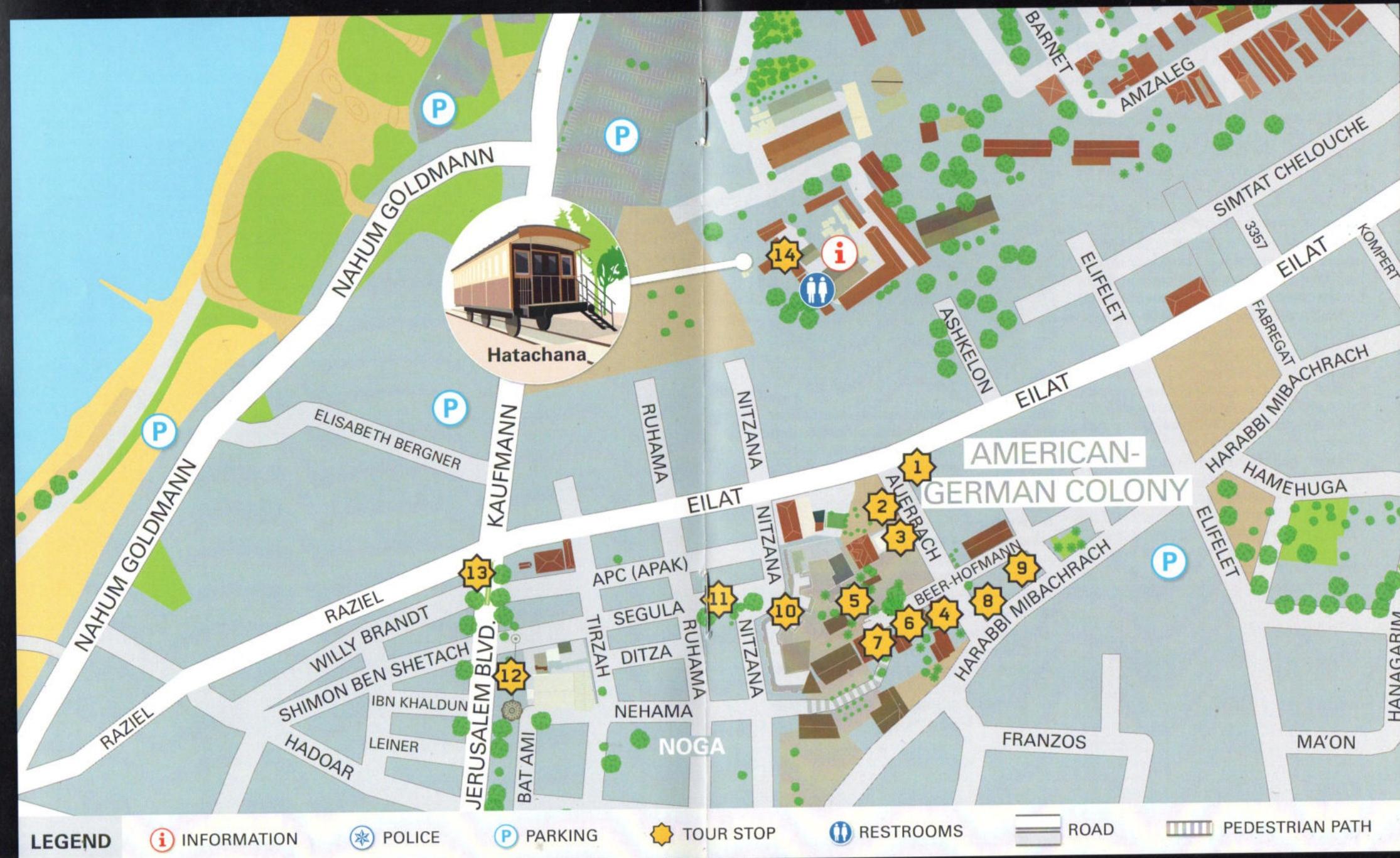
Influenced by Metzler, Ustinov left the Russian Orthodox Church and became a Protestant. Because members of the Russian aristocracy had to swear their allegiance to the Tsar and the Orthodox Church every year, Ustinov was forced to leave his homeland in 1876. For two years he lived in the state of Wurttemberg in southern Germany, where he married Marie, Metzler's daughter. In 1878, Ustinov and his wife came back to live in Jaffa.

The house whose yard we're standing in was built in 1866 by four families of American colonists, and was later sold to Templers in 1869. When Baron von Ustinov returned to Jaffa in 1878, he purchased the house, renovated and enlarged it, and went to live there with his wife.

At the time, a man by the name of Moritz Hall lived in one of the adjacent houses. Hall was a European Jew who had converted to Christianity and moved to Ethiopia, where he worked as a missionary. After several adventure-filled years, coupled with considerable hardships, Hall left Ethiopia and went to live in Jaffa's German Colony together with his wife, an Ethiopian princess, and their young daughter.

Plato von Ustinov and Moritz Hall became good friends and spent a lot of time together. Their friendship became even stronger when, in 1889, Ustinov divorced his first wife and married Magdalena, Moritz Hall's daughter.





In 1895, Ustinov decided to convert his large home into an upscale hotel, which he named the Park Hotel, and appointed Hall as its manager. The hotel was considered the most luxurious and highly regarded in Jaffa and, in 1898, even hosted the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II.

Baron Ustinov planted a large and well-tended garden in the hotel's yard that contained a wealth of exotic vegetation. Between the plants, there were also cages with different animals, such as monkeys and parrots, as well as archaeological findings that were part of his large private collection. The garden was open to the public and made quite an impression on Jaffa's residents and on visitors in the city.

Most of the plants in the garden disappeared over the years, but you can still see the huge Bengali ficus tree with its suspended roots. After taking hold in the ground, the roots thickened, creating the impression that they came from a few different trees.

When World War I broke out in 1914, Ustinov, who was a Russian subject, was forced to leave the country. During the British Mandate period, the building became an Anglican high school for girls, which stayed open until 1948. Following Israel's War of Independence, it served various purposes until 1970 when the Immanuel Hostel was opened there. The hostel belongs to the London Mission. One of the rooms contains an exhibit of photographs, documents and various artifacts that depict the building's history and that of Jaffa. We suggest that you ask the hostel staff for permission to see the exhibit. Also ask them, very nicely, if you can go up on the roof because it offers a panoramic view of the area. It's highly recommended.

Our next stop is right opposite the garden – the small, yet impressive, church.

Relax on the benches across from the church and listen to the next explanation.

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Stop No. 6

Immanuel Church 15 Beer-Hofmann Street

The Templers' founding generation did not build a church within the confines of their colony in Jaffa, nor did they in the other colonies they established. They adopted a simple lifestyle and believed there was no need for a magnificent church edifice in order to pray to God.

Years passed, and members of the colony's second generation came to be of a different opinion. They no longer embraced the community's tenets like their parents, and some even chose to return to the Evangelist church which their parents had left. Toward the end of the 19th century, the second generation of Templers decided to build themselves a church.

In 1898, during his visit in the Holy Land, Kaiser Wilhelm II was accompanied by a cleric named Friedrich von Braun. Braun, the head of the church in Stuttgart, Germany, had taken the matter of Jaffa's Evangelist community under his wing. He came to the Holy Land with the purpose of laying the cornerstone of the church we're now standing across from.

The missionary, Peter Martin Metzler – now 74 years old and living in Stuttgart – heard about the intention to build the church and decided to donate, together with Baron Plato von Ustinov, the tract of land which they owned in the middle of the colony.

The construction of the church lasted six years, and its dedication ceremony was held in 1904. It was named the German Evangelist Church of Jaffa and served the members of the German Colony until they were deported from Palestine during the Second World War.



Following the establishment of the State of Israel, the building was handed over to the members of the Scandinavian Lutheran Church. It underwent extensive renovations and is now called Immanuel Church.

We recommend that you visit the church and see its various decorative elements, particularly the beautiful and unusual stained glass windows, which depict different events related to Jaffa which are mentioned in the Old and New Testaments.

The church has one of the largest organs in Israel, and concerts featuring top organists are held there regularly. You should ask for the concert schedule and attend one of these special events.

From the front of the church, continue walking left on the winding street. Stop next to 16 Beer-Hofmann Street and listen to the next explanation.

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Stop No. 7

The Floyd Residence 16 Beer-Hofmann Street and the Corner of Amikam Eliyahu Street

16 Beer-Hofmann Street and the Corner of Amikam Eliyahu Street

Most of the American colonists returned to the United States, but there were a few who remained in Jaffa. Among them was the Floyd family, who built the house we're standing next to.

At first, Rolla and Theodosia Floyd did not have an easy time in the country. Their infant son was one of the children who had died of an illness right after they arrived on Jaffa's shore. And like many other colonists, they also experienced deprivation. Despite the difficulties, the devout Floyds decided to stay and fight for the fulfillment of the goal which had brought them here.

Rolla Floyd chose to become a tour guide. He learned Arabic and the history of the Holy Land, and began working for the famous travel agency – Thomas Cook & Sons. He was very successful and gained a reputation as the best tour guide in the country.



Floyd had brought a stagecoach with him from the United States, which was equipped with state-of-the-art wheels that eased the friction when traveling on the country's bad roads. The story says that whoever got to ride in this stagecoach didn't want to travel any other way after that.

In the early 1990's, the house was remodeled by the sculptor who now lives there. If you go around the house along the fence, you may be able to see some of her sculptures in the yard.

Go back the same way on Beer-Hofmann Street, and turn south on Auerbach Street. Continue listening to the next explanation as you stand near the impressive stone building with the arches, located on 9 Auerbach Street.

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Stop No. 8

The Breich Residence

9 Auerbach Street

The Templers made a significant contribution to Jaffa's commercial life. In the 1870's, two members of the colony, Karl Friedl and Immanuel Breich, opened large stores in the city. In 1875, Breich began importing shingles manufactured in Marseilles, France and, by doing so, left an indelible mark on the country's landscape. The impressive house with the arches that we're standing next to was his private residence and one of the most splendid homes in Jaffa. Next to the large palm tree in the yard, which the Breiches shared with the adjacent house, you can still see the well that was used by all of the colony's residents.

Return now to Beer-Hofmann Street and turn east towards No. 9, where we'll listen to the next explanation.

**



Stop No. 9

The Community House

9 Beer-Hofmann Street

Kaiser Wilhelm the Second's visit in the country constituted a turning point in the relationship between Germany and the residents of the German colonies that had been established here. As opposed to the first generation of Templers, who sought to sever their ties with Germany and create a new and pure society, the members of the second generation strengthened their ties with the homeland and became avid nationalists.

When the Nazi party rose to power in the early 1930's, some members of the Templer communities in Palestine joined its ranks and started engaging in political activity.

When World War II broke out, the British authorities arrested the members of the German colonies, who were considered subjects of an enemy country and a fifth column, and placed them in detention camps. In 1942, as the front came closer to Palestine's borders, the British decided to deport them to Australia and confiscate their property.

When World War II ended, and after details of the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis against European Jews became common knowledge, it was clear to everyone that the German colonists would not be able to return to their homes in Palestine. The colony's homes were seized by the British and, after the War of Independence, were handed over to the State of Israel, which used them to house various army units and government offices.

In 1955, the members of the German Colony received compensation for the property which had been confiscated from them, and the land that had belonged to the German Colony was transferred to Israel's full ownership.

The house we're standing next to was given to the Scandinavian Lutheran Church in the 1950's. It still serves as the community house and residence for the people who run Immanuel Church.

At the end of the street, standing all alone, you can see a mulberry tree that's more than 400 years old! The tree completely burnt down at the beginning of the 1990's. As part of the restoration works performed at the colony by the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality, a special agronomist ("tree doctor") was brought in to treat the tree. And after considerable efforts, he managed to restore it to life. Since then, it sprouts and blooms every year. If you stand next to the tree and look at it closely, you'll still be able to see remnants of the fire that threatened to consume it.

The houses of the American-German Colony are currently undergoing renovation and restoration... it's worth taking a stroll around the colony and observing the beauty of the restored homes. And try and imagine the beauty inherent in the homes which are still in a state of disrepair.

From Beer-Hofmann Street, let's return to the corner of Auerbach Street and Eilat Street. We'll walk west on Eilat Street until we reach 11 Nitzana Street. There we'll listen to the next explanation.

**



Stop No. 10

11 Nitzana Street

The building we're standing next to is one of the most beautiful examples of the grandiose construction that characterized Jaffa in the 1930's. In 1936, the owner of the lot, a Jaffa Arab who worked for General Motors, commissioned the Arab architect, Daoud Talil, to build the company's main branch in Jaffa. Talil, whose work was widely acclaimed after building some splendid homes in Jerusalem's Talbieh neighborhood, designed a long building in the International Style which was popular at the time. The ground floor of the building housed the offices, garages and car showroom, whereas the upper floors served as residences.

The Zichron Baruch synagogue is also located in the building. Until the 1970's, members of an ultra-Orthodox community who had originally come from Komarno in the Ukraine would pray here. As time passed, fewer and fewer people came to the synagogue. But further to an initiative by local residents, it is now once again open on weekdays. Its congregants are primarily workers from small factories in the vicinity.

There is a small square behind us – Segula Square – which is covered by the shade of a large ficus tree. Stop in the middle of the square and listen to the next explanation.

**

Stop No. 11

Segula Square

We're standing in the heart of the Noga neighborhood which was started by Arab entrepreneurs, residents of Jaffa, in the 1920's. The two- and three-story houses in the neighborhood were built in the International Style, which was contemporary and widespread during that period. The ground floors served as garages or small factories, whereas the upper floors were used as offices and residences. Many of the homes were occupied by the British, who chose to live in this centrally located neighborhood due to its proximity to the port, the Mandate government offices, and the military headquarters.

The building located on 8 Segula Street, built in 1934, is a good example of the construction style that prevailed in the neighborhood. It is a long building that spreads across the entire southern façade of

Segula Square, and its rounded balconies extend beyond the corners of the adjacent streets.

Today, the neighborhood is replete with artists and artisans from different disciplines who have opened workshops and galleries. It's a good idea to take a stroll around the neighborhood, visit the galleries, and observe the artists at work in their studios.

It's also worth checking the information on our website, where you can find a detailed list of the galleries in the neighborhood.

From the square, we'll continue walking west on Segula Street until we reach the Noga Theater piazza (on 9 Jerusalem Boulevard). Refer to the map to find your way. When you get there, stop across from the theater and listen to the next explanation.

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Stop No. 12

Noga Theater (Gesher Theater)

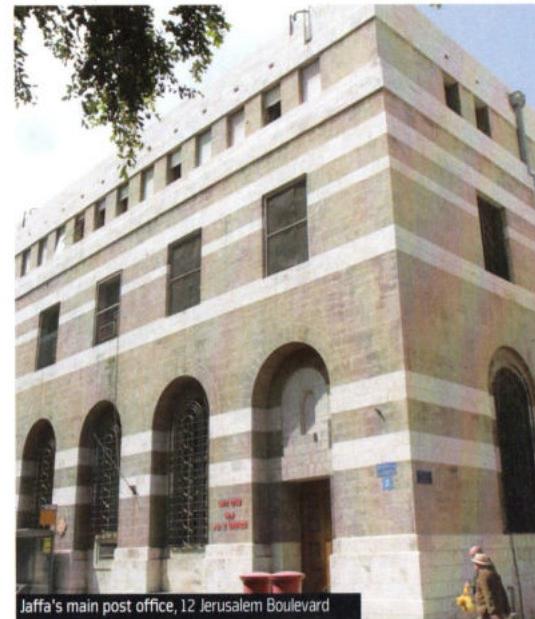
9 Jerusalem Boulevard

During the British Mandate for Palestine, King George Avenue (the former name of Jerusalem Boulevard) became Jaffa's main commercial and recreational area. Shops, government buildings, and public institutions were built all along the beautiful avenue.

The building we're standing next to was built in the 1940's by Arab businessmen, and at the time housed the Nabil cinema. After the establishment of the State of Israel the cinema was renamed Noga, and due to its great popularity, the entire area was referred to as Noga. Today it houses Gesher Theater, which is considered one of the mainstays of Israeli contemporary theater. Gesher Theater was founded in 1991 by Yevgeny Arye, who had been a celebrated director in Moscow before coming to Israel. Most of the actors are new immigrants from Russia, and the plays are presented in both Hebrew and Russian.

The Bat Ami pedestrian mall is to the right of Gesher Theater, built in the 1980's further to an initiative by the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality. The intention was to revitalize Jerusalem Boulevard by building a variety of stores and galleries on the pedestrian mall.

On the other side of the road, you can see a row of large buildings that were used for government, commercial or recreational purposes. Jaffa's main post office is located on 12 Jerusalem Boulevard. The splendid building, decorated with different colored stone strips, was designed by the British architect, Austen St. Barbe Harrison. It is one of the most important buildings constructed during the Mandate period and still fills its original function.



Jaffa's main post office, 12 Jerusalem Boulevard

North of it, at No. 10, there used to be a cinema, built in the 1940's by an Arab family named Falaha. The cinema itself was named "Rashid." After the establishment of the State of Israel, the "Tsli" cinema was opened at the same location. The building is now used as the Gesher Theater club.

From here let's proceed north along Jerusalem Boulevard until we reach No. 1 and the corner of Elat Street.

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In the 1920's, it used to be the main branch of Anglo-Palestine Bank, which was owned by the World Zionist Organization. It still serves as a branch of Bank Leumi. The management of Anglo-Palestine Bank worked out of this building until 1933, after which they relocated to Tel Aviv.

Our next stop is the corner of Jerusalem Boulevard and Raziel Street, on the west side of the intersection. We'll listen there to the next explanation.

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Stop No. 13

The Corner of Jerusalem Boulevard and Raziel Street

During the First World War, Hassan Bek served as Jaffa's military governor. As a proud representative of the Turkish government, he undertook a series of changes that would turn Jaffa into a modern and progressive metropolis, similar to Europe's large cities.

Hassan Bek exploited the vast power he had as a military governor in order to force his will upon Jaffa's residents, who didn't always agree with his decisions. Thus, for example, he tore down the commercial district that blocked the entrance to the port, despite the opposition voiced by the Muslim Waqf which owned the stores.

In 1915, the governor decided to pave a wide and modern avenue in Jaffa, like the ones found in European cities and similar to Rothschild Boulevard, which had been built in Jaffa's modern Jewish neighborhood – Tel Aviv.

Hassan Bek, described by his contemporaries as an uncompromising and ruthless governor, spared no effort to promote and expedite his plan. The owners of the land designated for the avenue, which was blooming with citrus groves, were summoned to the governor's office. Following a brief yet "persuasive" conversation, they "volunteered" to donate their land in order to beautify the city. Many of Jaffa's Arab residents were forcibly put to work cutting down the trees in the groves, whereas students of the Mikve Israel agricultural school had to plant a row of Washington palm trees that decorated the middle of the avenue.

An interesting story in this context concerns Negib Boustrus – one of Jaffa's wealthiest residents. He had built Boustrus Street (currently Raziel Street) and owned a four-story building at the end of it, where it intersects with Jerusalem Boulevard. In his memoirs, Yitzhak Rokach recounts how Negib Boustrus was brought to Jaffa under armed guard from Beirut. After spending an entire day in the sinister basement of the government's offices, he signed a document waiving his rights to the building and willingly transferred it to Hassan Bek so the avenue could be built.



Taken by "Photo Schwartz" around 1943, part of the "Bitmuna" collection

He even appealed to others to do the same. At the time of its construction, the avenue was perceived by Jaffa residents as a capricious and evil act by the ruthless governor, who in the middle of citrus groves had paved a 30-meter wide road that led to nowhere. Hassan Bek named it Jamal Pasha Avenue, in honor of his army commander who served as military governor of Ottoman-ruled Syria, which Jaffa was part of.

After World War I and the start of the British Mandate for Palestine, the street's name was changed to King George V Avenue. The wide and beautiful avenue became Jaffa's main commercial and recreational venue, adjacent to which many commercial establishments, government offices, and shops were built. It was extended to the south at the expense of some remaining citrus groves and served as a hub for the development of new neighborhoods in Jaffa.

With Jaffa's conquest during Israel's War of Independence, all the former names of Jaffa's streets were replaced by numbers. King George V Avenue became "Street No. 1." In 1949, when Tel Aviv and Jaffa were united under a single municipality, it was no longer possible to restore the name King George V Avenue because Tel Aviv already had a street by that name. A decision was therefore made to assign it its present name – Jerusalem Boulevard.

The avenue is now part of a major thoroughfare that connects Tel Aviv, via Jaffa, to the city of Bat Yam. One of the planned Tel Aviv-Yafo light rail lines is scheduled to use this route as well – connecting the cities of Bat Yam, Tel Aviv-Yafo, Ramat Gan, Bnei Brak, and Petach Tikva in a quick and convenient fashion.

Our tour ends here. You're welcome to continue strolling around Jaffa's charming streets. It's worth visiting another very impressive site that underwent preservation and restoration by the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality starting in 2005: Jaffa's historic train station complex – called "HaTachana."

Continue north on Kaufmann Street, which is a continuation of Jerusalem Boulevard, until you see a large parking lot on your right which leads to the entrance to the train station complex. Go in and listen to the next explanation.

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Stop No. 14

The Train Station "HaTachana"

The construction of the first railway in the country was completed in 1892, linking the port city of Jaffa to the holy city of Jerusalem. It was an initiative of the Turkish government, which sought to upgrade the country's infrastructures and thereby improve its economy. The concession to build the railway was sold to a French company, and that decision is clearly evident in the station's design.

When it first began operating, local residents viewed the train as a kind of miracle and a harbinger of progress and development.

The steam is approaching! The steam!... Everyone believes that the sound of the steam engine whistle is the messenger of enlightenment. It heralds a new life, a life of work, a life of progress, a fast-pace and strong life powered by the steam...

At the outset there was only one train a day, at one in the afternoon. Later on, further to its popularity and the growing number of passengers, a few trains would leave every day. The train thus became a serious competitor to the stagecoach. Passengers preferred to take the train rather than travel on the winding road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, which also took longer. Theodor Herzl and Kaiser Wilhelm II were among the train's most famous passengers.

During the First World War, the train was used for military purposes. In the 1920's, with the start of the British Mandate, a narrow train track was built that linked the station to Jaffa Port. During the Second World War, the station was used by the British army. The station stopped operating altogether at the end of the British Mandate when the State of Israel was established.

In 1902, Hugo Wieland built a factory and his own home near the train station. Wieland, who belonged to the Templar Association, had previously resided in Jaffa's German Colony. He was quick to see the commercial potential inherent in being close to the train station, and decided to open a factory that produced building materials. This factory, which was the first of its kind in the country, manufactured concrete shingles, stairs, decorative tiles, columns and other construction necessities. Wieland built his home – called Villa Wieland – next to the factory as well as the showroom where its products were sold. He then moved his family there.

The Wieland family was forced to leave Palestine during World War II and the factory was abandoned. After many years during which the compound suffered from neglect, the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality began restoring the train station in 2004, transforming it into a venue for culture, entertainment and recreation. The other buildings were also renovated and restored, and some old railcars and tracks are on display. You're invited to stroll around the buildings and shops and enjoy the special ambience that blends old and new.

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